

PURCHASE OF SABBATICAL LEAVE

A.C.A. § 24-7-604

DEFINITION (Amended by Act 142 of 1997 and Act 866 of 1999)

Sabbatical leave means leave of absence from a school from and after June 28, 1985, in order to obtain an advanced degree at an institution of higher learning or to fulfill the requirements of a scholarship or grant.

RULES (Amended by Act 542 of 1995, Act 206 of 1997, and Act 866 of 1999)

1. The cost to purchase sabbatical leave is the employee and employer contribution rate in effect at the time of purchase times the greater of the first full year's annual salary the member received for Arkansas service immediately preceding the purchase or the average of the member's three highest salaries. If the member does not have at least three salaries that comprise three years of service, the cost statement shall be based solely upon the first full year's annual salary for Arkansas service immediately preceding the purchase. If the member has not earned one full year of Arkansas service, no cost statement will be provided.
2. Interest is added to the cost:
 - A. If the cost is based solely on the member's first full year annual salary immediately preceding the purchase, interest will accrue from the end of that preceding year until paid in full.
 - B. If the cost is based on the member's first full year annual salary that is not immediately preceding the year at the time of the purchase, interest will accrue from the end of the preceding year until paid in full.
 - C. If the cost is based upon the average of the member's three (3) highest salaries, interest will accrue from the end of the latest year used in the computation until paid in full.
 - D. Interest will accrue annually on any unpaid balance based upon the initial payment date.
3. A year of sabbatical leave service shall be for a minimum of 120 days. Twenty (20) days shall be considered a month. Fractions of years of service may be credited as provided by A.C.A. § 24-7-601.
4. Purchased sabbatical leave service shall be credited to the year in which it was rendered.

5. If a member does not purchase, or is not eligible to purchase, all of his/her sabbatical leave service, he/she must purchase the remainder in inverse order.
6. Salaries for purchased sabbatical leave are not recorded.
7. Effective July 1, 1997, repayments of refunds or the purchase of service may be made by employer pick-up (tax-deferred deductions). See Rule No. 8-5 (Purchase Payment Rules).
8. ATRS will accept participant rollover contributions and/or direct rollovers of distributions for the purchase of service credit under certain circumstances. See Rule No. 8-4 (Rollover Acceptance and Distribution).
9. All rules pertaining to the minimum payments and payment methods are contained in Rule No. 8-5 (Purchase Payment Rules).

Amended: February 3, 2004
June 15, 2004